4: Schram M-5 (1911-1922) 1957 AE9 Monguor AE9

Apprentices who receive part of their training for a couple of years from another shaman, during the summer time, and who acknowledge him as their master, offer him a gown upon completion of their education. In return, they receive a drum from him. The rules of apprenticeship among the shamans are the same as those already noted for other apprentices, such as carpenters.

The overwhelming magical significance attached to the drum by the nomad shamans is lacking among the Monguor shamans. Among the nomads, when the apprentice, after completing his depressing training, beats the drum for the first time, he becomes hypnotized and tranced.[25] Although the Monguor shamans consider the drum a sacred magical object, the same overriding importance is not attached to it.

The drum is built in a primitive way. A handle is attached to an iron circle with iron rings, which produce noise when the drum is beaten. On the iron circle is stretched a piece of goatskin, which has been soaked in water and shaved. On its surface are often painted crude pictures of heaven, with the sun, moon, the big and the little dippers, stars and clouds. The drumstick is usually made from peachwood or strips of goat hide twisted together.

THE KNIFE

The shamans use a knife when driving away the evil spirits. The knife is twelve inches long and two inches wide, and pointed at the end. To the handle are attached noisemaking iron rings. Sometimes the Chinese knife used for cutting noodles is substituted.

THE MAGIC STAFF

The staff, which is of wood, seems to be an important tool.[26] To the top is affixed a copper mirror surmounted by a three-pronged iron fork to which tassels of red rope are attached. The staff ends in an iron point, so that it may be planted erect in the ground during the time when council with the spirit is asked for. The magic staff is a tool used by lamas and Taoists as well as by shamans. The staff of the lamas differs from that of the shamans in that the mirror is surmounted by a copper skull, while above the skull is the point of a spear. The staff of the Taoists has an octagonal shaft with an iron point on top.

Each time, before performing a rite, the shaman asks his spirits in the staff about the most fitting rite for the circumstance, the sacrifice to be offered. The answer is supplied by the twelve spirits making the arms of the shaman shiver, and so he knows how to conjure evil spirits who harm persons, families, or herds. It is always called *Yang-t'ou san-ch'iang*. (I could never get an explanation of this Chinese term.) The staff is used when the shamans go into private families in order

[25] Nioradze, *op. cit.*, 79.

[26] Ugo Holmbergs, Siberian mythology, in *Mythology of all races* 4: 522, Boston, 1927.